THE

Oxfordshire Tragedy;

OR, THE

Virgin's Advice.

TEWKESBURY:

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THE
Oxfordshire Tragedy, &c.

PART I.

YOU virgins fair, of beauty bright,
And you that are of Cupid's fold:
Unto my tragedy give ear,
For 'tis as true as e'er was told.
In Oxfordshire, a lady fair,
The daughter of a worthy knight,
A gentleman that lived near,
Was enamour'd of this beauty bright,

Rosanna was this maiden's name,
The flower of fair Oxfordshire;
This gentleman a courting came,
Begging of her to be his dear,
Her kind heart to love inclin'd,
Young Cupid bending of his bow,
And left a fatal dart behind,
That prov'd her fatal overthrow.

Within a pleasant grove they walk'd,
And valleys where the lambs do play;
Sweet pleasant tales of love they talk'd,
For to pass the long summer's day.
My charming sweet rose, said he,
She how the pleasant flowers spring:
The pretty birds on every tree,
With melody the groves did ring.

I nothing have te pleaſe or delight
My ſoul, but thoſe charms of thine;
Our hearts are fixed, therefore my dear,
Like turtles let us both combine,
Let me embrace my heart's delight,
Within this pleaſant bower here;
This bank of violets for my bed,
Shaded with thoſe roſes fair.

She ſaid, What do you mean, I pray?
I am a noble lady born,
What ſignifies my beauty bright,
When my honour it is gone?
My parents they will me diſdain,
And young virgins me deride,
O do not prove my overthrow,
If you love ſtay 'till I'm your bride.

Sweet angel dear, I do I vow,
By all the powers ſo divine
You are ſhe whom I adore,
And in love my heart confine.
And if thou doſt me refuſe
This ſword muſt ſoon end my woe;
Then from her arms he ſtraitway flew,
And in his paſſion his ſword he drew.

Her hand as white as lillies fair,
Moſt dreadfully he did wring;
She ſaid, My death's approaching near,
Should I relieve and ſuccour him
It brings on my ſad fall,
'Tis I muſt receive the wound,
The crimſon dye forſook her cheeks,
At his feet ſhe dropp'd on the ground.

This innocent he did betray,
Full ſore againſt her chaſte deſire,
True love is a celeſtial flame,
But flames of luſt a raging fire,
But when her ſenſes did revive,
He many vows nad oaths did make,
That he'd forever true remain,
And her company not forſake.

PART II.

NOW virgins to the ſecond part,
Obſerve this ſweet creatures end,
When once your virtue it is gone,
You've nothing you to recommend,
After our traitor had his will,
He never did come near her more;
Then from her eyes both night and day,
The cryſtal tears did pour.

In the ſilent grave ſhe then
Did wander quite alone;
And for the creature ſhe had loſt
In the ſaid bower thus would moan.
Oh that I was ſome little bird,
That I might fly to hide this ſhame;
O fooliſh maid, thus to believe
The baſe deluſion of a man.

The harmleſs lamb could ſport and play,
The turtle conſtant to his mate;
Nothing more wretched is than I,
To buy the man that doth me hate,
I will to him a letter ſend,
Remembering of the vows he made
Within that ſhady bower, where
My tender heart he firſt betray'd.

Her trembling hands a letter wrote,
My deareſt dear what muſt I do;
Alas! what miſchief have I done,
That I am ſlighted ſo by you.
I have ſlighted many lords of fame,
Who little knows my miſery,
I did forſake a worthy knight,
And all for the ſake of thee.

And now my little infant dear,
Will quickly ſpread abroad my ſhame,
One word of comfort ſend to me,
'Ere by thy cruelty am ſlain.
This anſwer he did to her ſend,
Your inſolence amazes me,
To think that I ſhould marry one,
With whom before I had been free.

Indeed I'll not the father be
Unto the baſtard that you bear;
So take no farther thoughts of me,
No more from you pray let me hear.
When ſhe this letter did receive,
She rung her hands and wept full ſore,
Yet every day ſhe ſtill would range
To lament within that bower.

This faithleſs wretch began to think,
How noble were her parents dear;
She ſaid I ſure ſhall puniſh'd be
When they my ſtory come to hear,
So then the devil did begin
To enter in his wretched mind;
Her precious life he then muſt have,
Then how to act the thing did find.

He many times did watch her out
Unto the pleaſant bower, where
One day he did in private go,
When he knew ſhe was not there,
And privately he dug her grave
Underneath an oaken tree;
Then in the branches he did hide,
To act this bloody tragedy.

Poor harmleſs ſoul ſhe nothing knew,
But as uſual ſhe went there,
And on a bank of violets ſhe
In a mournful manner then ſit down.
Of his unkindneſs did complain,
You gentle gods ſo kind, ſaid ſhe,
Did you this grave for me prepare,
He then deſcended from the tree.

As ſhe the grave did eſpy,
She then aroſe to view the ſame:
She little thought her lover nigh,
He ſaid, Strumpet thy death is near,
O! welcome, welcome, ſhe reply'd,
As long as by that hand I die;
This is a pleaſant marriage-bed,
I'm ready, uſe your cruelty.

But may the heavens bring to light,
This crime, and let it thus appear:
Winter or ſummer on this grave,
May this roſe be the ſame
Never to wither, tho' 'tis cropt,
But when thy hand doth touch the ſame,
Then may the bloom that moment ceaſe,
To bring thy crime to ſhame.

More ſhe ſaid, but with his ſword
He pierc'd her body through,
Then throw'd her in the ſilent grave,
Saying, Now there's an end of you,
He filled up the grave again,
With weeds the ſame did overſpread,
Then unconcern'd he ſtrait went home,
And inſtantly he went to bed.

Her parents they were grieved ſore,
For the loſs of their danghter dear;
Thinking that ſhe was ſtole away,
Who was to their riches heir.
Twelve months ago this was done,
There's thouſands for a truth do know,
According as ſhe did deſire,
On her the damaſk roſe did grow.

And many wondered at the ſame,
For all the winter it did ſpring;
If any one did crop the roſe,
In a moment it would grow up again.
The thing was told the country o'er,
And many came the ſight tu ſee;
This miracle from heaven ſhewn,
Among the reſt he muſt curious be.

To go and ſee if it was true,
And when unto the place he came,
The beouteous roſe he ſaw in bloom,
And eagerly he cropt the ſame.
The leaves faded from off the buſh,
The roſe within his hand did die:
He ſaid, It is Roſanna's blood,
Which ſprings up from her fair body.

Many people that were there,
Took notice of what he did ſay:
And ſaid he had a murder done,
And the truth he told without more delay,
They dug and found the body there,
The firſt of June it is well known:
Before a magiſtrate he went,
And in a priſon he doth mourn.

'Till he puniſhment receives,
No doubt but he will have his due,
Young men by this a warning take,
Keep your vows whate'er you do.
For God doth find out many ways,
Such henious crimes to bring to light;
For murder is a crying ſin,
And hateful in his bleſſed ſight.

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